

116  
**CANADA'S PRESS**

# 40,000 miles of wires keep nation informed

By Gillis Purcell, Toronto

CANADIAN DAILY newspapers receive what has often been termed — and fairly — the finest news service in the world.

Newspapers of no other country receive in a single package so broad and complete an international news report. It combines Associated Press, Reuters and Agence France-Presse.

The domestic report is largely the product of 102 daily newspapers and 300 privately-owned broadcasting stations.

The enterprise that puts together this vast and valuable output of news is the Canadian Press, a co-operative that makes no profits, declares no dividends. It was established in 1917 and its annual budget is \$ 6 000 000 exclusive of the cost of gathering the Canadian news its newspaper members contribute as part of their responsibility.

After sorting, rewriting and editing the domestic news available from the newspapers and broadcasting stations, The Canadian Press distributes this news supply back among its members (all but seven of Canada's dailies receiving wire news services) for display to the 13 000 000 daily newspaper readers in Canada under the familiar (CP) logotype.

The CP has a 40 000-mile system of wires, and a large portion of the money it spends yearly is for wire rentals. CP trunk circuits, leased from Canadian Pacific Telecommunications, run across the country from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Prince Rupert, British Columbia. Capillaries of provincial wires fan out the flow to newspapers off the main line. In Ontario alone 33 papers are served on a circuit out of Toronto.

If the copy transmitted over the leased CP circuits were handled instead on a toll basis — press rate is about two-thirds of a cent a word between Toronto and Montreal, for instance — the cost would be fabulous. On a day when the budget comes down at Ottawa or a world statesman makes a vital speech, each of the papers on the three wire CP network in Central Canada would receive more than 175 columns of news, including 100 columns of Canadian.

Almost nine-tenths of CP members receive their wire news in column-width

THE CO-OPERATIVE news agency Canadian Press, described here by its General Manager, has a budget of \$ 6,000,000 and makes no profits. But the good will of its members, plus a policy of hard news before opinion, has made it a vital element in national unity.

lines — Teletypewriter — permitting automatic typesetting if desired. The other members get the copy in unjustified lines, coded for computer use by members who so wish. A number of papers receive a special service of stock market quotations by Teletypewriter and by data-speed transmission.

The head office at Toronto is the core of the CP's wire system. There 55 editors and 35 traffic men handle eastern news for the West and western news for the East, watching the flow of copy for accuracy and style and for development of obscure but interesting angles.

For international news, London and New York are key points of extreme importance.

In New York, on the fifth floor of the midtown Associated Press building, nine CP editors select the news piped to Canada 22 hours a day, reducing, on a busy day, some 200 000 words to 60 000 publishable words for the outgoing circuit. At the New York office, ten teleprinters carry news from three main sources — the output of the CP overseas staff and correspondents; the complete world news report of AP.

At the London bureau, in the AP building just off Fleet Street, another job of sifting is done by five Canadian editors who have available the complete report of Press Association, the organization of Britain's dailies, and the bureau staff's own output on Parliament and events of Canadian interest.

Two staff men at Washington watch for angles of special interest, at the capital or elsewhere in the States. From 1964 to 1969, CP maintained a staff correspondent in Moscow. Staff reporters have covered Canadian participation in the UN's operations in Korea, Egypt, the Congo and Cyprus. In any year, CP men range the world on various international assignments, bolstering the Canadian-interest coverage provided regularly by part-time correspon-

dents in Commonwealth countries, Africa and South America.

Across Canada are eight bureaux — Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver — with day and night staffs to keep the news-stream flowing, meantime adding to it the boiled-down news product of the respective regions. Staff correspondents are stationed at St. John's, Newfoundland; Saint John, New Brunswick; London and Windsor, Ontario; Regina, Calgary and Victoria.

The CP staff numbers close to 400, of whom more than half are members of the editorial staff, mostly filing editors (who cut incoming copy to the capacity of their outgoing circuits and keep the best news constantly ahead) and rewrite men (who boil down the copy received from CP member newspapers). Virtually every filing editor or rewrite man has been a reporter and they frequently go back on the street if a big story breaks on which the CP needs direct coverage rather than coverage through a member paper. Ottawa is the only bureau where reporters outnumber editors, 20 of the 25 staff members covering Parliament, government departments and the military services.

## Strictly Impartial

Essentially, the Canadian Press is strictly impartial and unbiased in the presentation of news, for its members include newspapers of every political stripe.

The Canadian Press gives each member a basic news service, complete in every department, including world news, the domestic news of Canada, financial and sports news and political news covering Parliament and provincial legislatures. But it must be news, not opinion. The organization is particularly proud of its fast and accurate service on federal elections. Because it was claimed CP reports from the East influenced late voting in the far West, a federal law in 1938 prohibited publication of election results before the close of local polls — but the CP continued to lay down its services without delay in newspaper offices for publication when local polls closed. Unless an election count is exceptionally close, CP invariably flashes the result

while polls are still open in three western provinces.

Success of the CP depends primarily on the good will of its members in the prompt production of the news of their district for the benefit of the membership at large. It is an interesting manifestation of the co-operative spirit that the large metropolitan papers contribute a major share of the general service, perhaps lessening the value of their own regional coverage.

In 1948, CP established the first co-operative service of Canadian news pictures. At the start CP members got their news pictures by airmail. Now 55 newspapers are served on a coast-to-coast wirephoto network which carries AP photos in addition to CP's Canadian content.

After receiving their news in English for 34 years, the French-language members got together with CP in 1951 to set up a service in French. CP now serves nine French-language dailies in three provinces with the world's only French-language news service delivered for automatic typesetting. In 1964, the world news service of Agence France-Presse was obtained to supplement services available in English.

### Wide radio service

From 1933 to the end of 1940, the CP was also Canada's national news service on the air. For those seven years it provided without remuneration (and at considerable cost) radio bulletins day and night to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and to individual stations. From 1941, an agreement was concluded with CBC to provide the entire news service to be processed by the CBC staff.

When it gave news to the CBC free, CP avoided any link with radio advertising. But in 1941 CP members voted to make news available for commercial use on the air — a direct reversal of previous policy.

In mid-1941 a CP subsidiary, Press News Limited, began to process newspaper copy for radio use and pipe it into radio stations by cross-country tele-type circuit. A service in French, started in 1945, now goes to some 60 stations.

A new CP company, Broadcast News Limited, was organized in 1953. It has a board of 10 directors, five named by CP and five by the private broadcasters. The experience of broadcasters and newspaper men combined to direct development of Broadcast News which by 1960 served some 300 private radio and TV stations. CP services to the CBC and non-radio subscribers continued through Press News.

The history of co-operative news-gathering in Canada goes back to 1907 when the Western Associated Press was founded by the Winnipeg publishers to meet an intolerable situation — control of news service in Canada by rail-

ways. The Canadian Pacific Railway held the Canadian rights to the AP service, and collection of news in Ontario and Quebec was largely in the hands of the Great North Western Telegraph Company, a Grand Trunk affiliate. Its service was cheap but woefully poor — the papers had to take what they got.

Formation of the WAP was the first move in a newspaper revolt. It gathered support in the West and entered into direct competition with the railway. Deprived of the AP service, it waged an uphill fight. Its members carried on loyally, though they were getting what in some ways was an inferior news service at a cost much greater than that supplied by the CPR to their competitors. Meanwhile, Canadian publishers were agreed that sooner or later they must establish their own news agency. In 1909 Maritime daily publishers founded the Eastern Press Association, based on the same ideal of co-operative news service.

The turning point came when the Western Associated Press appealed to the railway commission, which controlled telegraph rates, against the exorbitant rates charged by the Canadian Pacific Railway for transmission of WAP news as compared with the low rates charged for the CPR service. In the appeal, the daily publishers of Ontario and Quebec stood shoulder to shoulder with their western confrères. In 1910 the railway commission declared in favour of equal rates for all press matter. The fight was over. The railway, in later years a staunch friend of CP recognized that it was out of its sphere in the news agency field and surrendered AP rights in Canada to the Canadian daily newspapers.

An organization was needed to take over these rights and guarantee AP a return service of Canadian news. The establishment in 1911 of the Canadian Press Limited resulted. The ambition of its founders was to make it a truly national organization, but until 1917 it

was merely a holding company for the Canadian rights of AP. The WAP and EPA served newspapers in the West and the Maritimes. In Ontario and Quebec separate organizations were formed for morning and evening papers respectively. To some extent these four independent agencies exchanged the news of their territories, but the arrangement was loose, wasteful and cumbersome.

Barriers to a national agency were the broad, almost unpopulated, expanses separating the news organizations — without leased wires across these gaps there could be no united association and the cost was prohibitive. The gaps were three — Saint John to Montreal, Toronto to Winnipeg, and Calgary to Vancouver.

The insistent need for Canadian unity in the First World War fused the separated news units into one. In the national interest the government of Sir Robert Borden offered an annual grant of \$ 50 000, to be expended in bridging the gaps by leased wires. Immediately the sectional news bodies amalgamated into the national entity now known as The Canadian Press.

For seven years The Canadian Press accepted the government grant — until its cancellation in 1924. The small but growing membership decided without hesitation to absorb the \$ 50 000 expenditure and maintain the leased wires it had paid for.

Their feeling was fortified because in the latter years evidence had accumulated that interested politicians regarded this grant as a fulcrum of influence on the character of the news service. The newspapers agreed that sum was not too great for the daily press of Canada to pay for freedom, not from government control which had never existed, but from the mere suspicion of government control. Their annual meeting of 1925 went on record that never again must the Canadian Press accept a grant or subsidy from any source whatever.

NEW YORK TIMES

19 June 1969

### EUROPEANS REQUEST PARLEY ON SECURITY

Special to The New York Times

PARIS, June 18—The assembly of the Western European Union appealed unanimously today for a carefully prepared European security conference in which the United States and the Soviet Union would participate.

The union, a consultative group, also urged that the Soviet Union end the occupation of Czechoslovakia and insisted that no permanent European settlement could be negotiated until the right of all European peoples to self-determination

was recognized.

The Western European Union Assembly has no direct authority. Its members are mainly legislators from Britain and the six countries that are members of the European Common Market — France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. Therefore, diplomats believe that the Assembly's resolutions accurately reflect political trends within these countries.

The call for a European security conference was regarded by diplomats as the most positive response yet to the proposal for such a conference made by the Warsaw Pact countries after their meeting in Budapest in March.